

NOAA 30th Anniversary Toolkit

OUR SEAS AND OUR SKIES



30th Anniversary Toolkit
“Our Seas and Our Skies: 30 years of Excellence at NOAA”

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I. INTRODUCTION

NOAA's 30th Anniversary celebration will officially occur on October 3, 2000, but events will be held throughout the year 2000 to commemorate this event. These events will involve many groups, including NOAA employees, our constituents, Congress and the general public. The 30th Anniversary Committee, staffed by representatives of NOAA's staff and line offices, has created this toolkit to assist NOAA personnel with developing plans for celebrating the anniversary.

The major goals for celebrating NOAA's 30th Anniversary are to increase employee recognition and pride in the agency and to increase the public's awareness of NOAA -- its mission, history, and accomplishments -- and how these activities are relevant to the public. By involving more NOAA employees in outreach activities, we can make major strides in expanding the public's awareness of NOAA.

For example, open houses and tours of NOAA facilities for local schools and the general public are excellent ways to involve NOAA employees. There are also many annual meetings and conventions at which NOAA's standard presentations or displays can be modified to highlight the 30th Anniversary. This toolkit provides ideas and guidelines for promoting the 30th Anniversary into your outreach activities.

NOAA leadership has identified the educational community as a specific audience for the Anniversary campaign. This year the education outreach program has expanded to include the NOAA Steward's Program. NOAA Stewards are employees who volunteer to increase community awareness about the agency. Every employee interested in participating can register as a NOAA Steward with the Office of Public and Constituent Affairs. Please contact Robert Hansen at (202) 482-4594 or by email Robert.C.Hansen@hdc.noaa.gov. The time spent in outreach activities by NOAA Stewards will be recorded and these efforts will be recognized at the end of the year by NOAA leadership.

The enclosed toolkit lists available materials and resources that can be used in outreach efforts as well as a partial list of ways to become involved in the community. The toolkit also contains information for ordering 30th Anniversary banners and promotional supplies, and a detailed planning guide for holding an open house or other major event.

The message we would like to send to the community is a view of NOAA's mission and accomplishments along with pride in its employees' expertise. NOAA does important and interesting work -- share your knowledge with your community!

II. NOAA STEWARDS PROGRAM AND EDUCATION OUTREACH

The NOAA Education Outreach Program offers many opportunities for promoting the 30th Anniversary initiative. It allows NOAA employees to go into their communities to educate people about NOAA's mission, products, and services. Many NOAA employees already volunteer in schools or work with Boy/Girl Scout troops and civic organizations.

Building upon these efforts, a program was created for the NOAA 30th Anniversary: the NOAA Stewards Program. Its goal is to encourage employees, known as NOAA Stewards, who volunteer to increase community awareness about the agency.

Bob Hansen in NOAA's Office of Public and Constituent Affairs will head this program. Please call him at 202/482-4594 or send an e-mail to him, at Robert.C.Hanse@hdq.noaa.gov, to inform him of your efforts or volunteer for this program. The time spent in outreach activities by NOAA Stewards will be recorded and these efforts will be recognized at the end of the year by NOAA leadership. The Steward's Program will also post opportunities for employees to participate in events.

Among the activities that can be pursued by NOAA Stewards:

Working In the Schools and with the Youth Organizations

Speaking in classrooms

Speaking at school assemblies and workshops

Judging science fairs

Participating in career days

Judging the Ocean Science Bowl contests

Mentoring local science teachers

Creating open house activities at NOAA facilities designed especially for school field trips

Establishing sessions to help scouts earn merit badges

Many components of NOAA have already established educational programs. This information can be found on the NOAA Education Web Site: www.education.noaa.gov. For NOAA's 30th Anniversary, NOAA educational information will be listed or hot-linked on the 30th Anniversary web site under Education at www.30th.noaa.gov. To get additional information about handouts for NOAA's 30th Anniversary activities, contact Michelle Crockett, in NOAA's Office of Public and Constituent Affairs Outreach Unit, telephone: 301/713-1208, or Michelle.A.Crockett@ofa.noaa.gov.

Working with Civic Organizations

Volunteering with the Izaak Walton league, Trout Unlimited, etc.

Explaining NOAA's scientific activities to Rotary Clubs, the Lions Club, Kiwanis, and others

Staffing booths during Public Service Recognition Week

Working on beach cleanup during September for Coast Weeks

Adopting a Local School

Some schools welcome the special attention that comes from being "adopted" by a NOAA facility. When the school is "adopted," it is eligible to receive extra NOAA brochures and handouts, NOAA staff make a special effort to attend the school's career days, and can provide mentoring opportunities for science and math teachers.

Another Possible Outreach Activity

NOAA Day

Another outreach initiative to consider is working with your local politicians to proclaim NOAA Day on October 3, 2000, the actual anniversary date. Contact your local state Senator or Representative about the procedures involved to issue a proclamation of NOAA Day. (This may involve special legislation.) The Representative could be invited to the NOAA facility on October 3 as part of the 30th Anniversary activities.

In summary, these are examples of ways in which NOAA employees can make themselves available to their local communities, whether it is encouraging students to become interested in science careers, or informing general audiences on the important work that we do every day.

III. 30TH ANNIVERSARY PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

Offices are encouraged to incorporate the 30th Anniversary logo and slogan when possible. The logo is available for downloading at www.30th.noaa.gov. The slogan is "Our Seas and Our Skies: 30 years of Excellence at NOAA."

Banners with the 30th Anniversary logo and slogan can be ordered for use as backdrops and/or decoration and these banners can easily be included in any NOAA exhibit planned for a conference, trade show, school program, or special event. This is an inexpensive and effective tool for promoting the Anniversary year.

Vertical and horizontal banners are available on loan for open houses or other public events:

Vertical - 2.5' wide by 8' high and attached to single width pop-up exhibits

Horizontal - sizes range from 3' wide by 2' high up to 10' wide and 3' high

An office can request a banner by e-mail to: Robert.C.Hansen@hq.noaa.gov or by phone to 202/482-4594. Allow 10 working days for delivery of the banner. You will be asked to return the banner on a specified date. Please help others by keeping to this date.

Ordering NOAA Stickers

NOAA stickers can be ordered from the Kansas City National Logistics Support Center at 816/926-7993. You should allow approximately 10 working days for the order to arrive at your desired destination. When you call, you will be asked to provide your organizational code, your task code, the stock number of the item, any special instructions like delivery to a different address and the quantity desired (there is a 150 maximum number per order; you may have to call the NLSC a second or third time to amass the correct number of stickers). *Please note that these depict the standard NOAA seal.*

Stickers

NOAA form 68-1B, 3" stickers, 50 to a package, three package maximum.

NOAA form 68-1E, 6" stickers, 50 stickers to a package, three package maximum.

IV. OBTAINING MATERIALS AND INFORMATION FOR HANDOUTS

Finding publications and brochures on the Internet to create your own handouts -

The following are one-page backgrounders. These information sheets are useful for describing line office activities.

A WORD ABOUT NOAA... -- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) conducts research and gathers data about the global oceans, atmosphere, space, and sun, and applies this knowledge to science and services that touch the lives of all Americans. (PDF) To view the backgrounders in Portable Document Format (PDF) you may need to download Adobe Acrobat Reader. www.publicaffairs.noaa.gov/back.html

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE -- The National Weather Service is the primary source of weather data, forecasts and warnings for the United States. Television weather casters and private meteorology companies prepare their forecasts using this information. (PDF) www.publicaffairs.noaa.gov/grounders/nws99.html.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SATELLITE, DATA, AND INFORMATION SERVICE -- NESDIS manages the U.S. civil operational remote-sensing satellite systems, as well as global data bases for meteorology, oceanography, solid-earth geophysics, and solar-terrestrial sciences. (PDF) www.publicaffairs.noaa.gov/grounders/nedis99.html

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE -- NOAA Fisheries is dedicated to protecting and preserving the nation's ocean wildlife through scientific research, fisheries management, habitat conservation, and enforcement. The agency continues to focus its efforts on sustaining our marine resources. (PDF) www.publicaffairs.noaa.gov/grounders/nmfs99.html

NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE -- The National Ocean Service grew out of the nation's oldest scientific agency, Survey of the Coast, established in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson to chart the U.S. coast and its harbors. As the Nation's principal advocate for coastal and ocean stewardship, the NOS Service develops the national foundation for coastal and ocean science, management, response and restoration, geodesy, and navigation. (PDF) www.nos.noaa.gov and <http://www.publicaffairs.noaa.gov/grounders/nos97.html>

NOAA RESEARCH—OFFICE OF OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH -- NOAA's research, conducted through the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), is the driving force behind environmental products and services that protect life and property and promote sustainable economic growth. (PDF) www.publicaffairs.noaa.gov/grounders/oar99.html

OFFICE OF MARINE AND AVIATION OPERATIONS -- Since NOAA's beginning, a large percentage of its oceanographic, atmospheric, hydrographic, fisheries and coastal data has been collected on NOAA ships and aircraft. This fleet is crewed and operated by civilians and officers of the NOAA Commissioned Corps (a uniformed service of the United States). (PDF) www.publicaffairs.noaa.gov/grounders/noaacorps99.html

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ON NOAA -- The creation of NOAA on October 3, 1970 was the result of a series of decisions which recognized the importance of the oceans and atmosphere to the nation's welfare and economy. www.publicaffairs.noaa.gov/grounders/noaahis.html

Suggested Web Sites for Other Materials

Remember that information on NOAA web sites is in the public domain. The information can be down loaded and copied.

NOAA's Education Web Site is www.education.noaa.gov. The web sites is divided into sections for Teachers, Students, and Everyone. It is further divided by scientific topics with a search engine for subject matter queries. This web site has many publications that can be downloaded for special events, open houses, and educational outreach.

NOAA Photo Library www.photolib.noaa.gov

1998 Year of the Ocean - Kids and Teacher Activities www.yoto98.noaa.gov

For information about NOAA and its Line Offices, go to the appropriate web sites:

- NOAA – www.noaa.gov
- National Weather Service -- www.nws.noaa.gov
- National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service -- www.nesdis.noaa.gov
- National Marine Fisheries Service -- www.nmfs.gov
- National Ocean Service -- www.nos.noaa.gov
- NOAA Research—Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research – www.oar.noaa.gov
- Office of Marine and Aviation Operations – www.oma.noaa.gov

Items for Elementary School Children

The Owlie Skywarn Homepage - Owlie Skywarn helps young kids learn about hazardous weather while they use this coloring book. www.nws.noaa.gov/er/mhx/owlie1.htm

Pacific Coral Reef Coloring Book - This coloring book lets kids see the beauty and value of coral reefs. www.education.noaa.gov/books/paccoral/pacreef.htm

Owlie Skywarn Pages on Tornadoes, Lightning, Flash Floods, Hurricanes, Winter Weather, Carbon Monoxide. www.crh.noaa.gov/mkx/owlie/owlie.htm

Marine Debris Coloring Book - This coloring book helps kids see the hazards of throwing junk into the ocean and overboard from boats. www.education.noaa.gov/books/debris/debris1.htm

Kohola and Kolea - The Whale and the Plover - This coloring book is written in both Hawaiian and in English. www.education.noaa.gov/books/whlplvr/whlplvr.htm

Puffy the Puffer Book of Fun Fish Facts - This book, also called the Fisheries' 125th Anniversary book, is a coloring book for kids that highlights marine trivia, games, mazes, a quiz and more. www.education.noaa.gov/books/puffy/puffy.html

Office of Response and Restoration - This site for students helps teach about how NOAA and other agencies respond to oil spills and hazardous chemical accidents. It also contains some experiments for students to try. www.response.education.noaa.gov/kids/kids.html

Adopt a Buoy Activity Book - There are two pages to color on this site and the site focuses on the activities of the data buoys that provide information about the oceans surrounding the United States and its territories. www.education.noaa.gov/books/adopt/adopt0.html

Information for Middle School Children and Higher Grades

Web Activities Using Scientific Data (Grades 6-12 and Adult Guide) - Learn to explore the Web using Browser tools and do scientific analysis using data from government and university sources. - June 1998. www.sec.noaa.gov/Activities/index.html

Oceans: Into the Next Millennium of Oceanographic Research. This book, in Adobe Acrobat gives an overview of ongoing oceanographic research. It is written for students in middle school (or higher), teachers and the general public. www.publicaffairs.noaa.gov/oceans.pdf

Marine Careers - The site includes overviews of the fields of marine biology, oceanography, and ocean engineering; a look at what the future is likely to hold for careers in these fields; information on salaries in various marine science fields; and other great stuff. This site is a project of the National Sea Grant College Program and is based on the publication Marine Science Careers: A Sea Grant Guide to Ocean Opportunities. www.marinecareers.net

Examples of Other Kinds of Information Available from www.education.noaa.gov
Northwest Salmon: A Fact Sheet. www.yoto98.noaa.gov/books/salmon/salmon1.htm

Endangered Whales: A Fact Sheet. www.yoto98.noaa.gov/books/whales/whale1.htm

Global Positioning System enters High School Curriculum - In a joint program between the National Ocean Service's National Geodetic Survey (NGS) and the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping (ACSM), students learn about global positioning systems (GPS) in a hands-on program by creating maps of their school grounds. NGS will hire summer high school interns to work on special local GPS projects.
www.nos.noaa.gov/education/outreach

Items for Teachers

Tales of Whales, Turtles, Sharks, and Snails: An Elementary Level Education Handbook - This is a marine study guide for Grades 4-6. The purpose of this publication is to increase the awareness, knowledge and literacy of elementary students in marine-related subjects. It is not necessary to be in proximity to a coastal environment to benefit from the activities presented in this handbook. www.graysreef.nos.noaa.gov/tw.html

Watch Out... Storms Ahead! Teacher Guide - A weather safety program to be used by teachers in conjunction with "Watch Out...Storms Ahead" Owlle Skywarn's Weather Book.
gopher://esdim1.esdim.noaa.gov:70/00/NOAA_systems/education/owliegui.asc

Coral Reefs: An English Compilation of Activities for Middle School Students -
www.epa.gov/ncepihom/Catalog/EPA160B97900A.html

Coastal Awareness - This resource guide is for teachers of all grades
gopher://esdim1.esdim.noaa.gov:70/00/NOAA_systems/education/coast2.asc

Resource Guide for Oceanography and Coastal Resources - This online resource guide is for elementary, junior high and high school science teachers to promote the exploration of ecology and coastal awareness.
swfsc.ucsd.edu/bibliography/GUIDE.htm

NOAA Teacher at Sea Program - Teachers interested in oceanographic research can apply for a one to three week scientific cruise as a crew member. www.tas.noaa.gov

Ordering NOAA Brochures

PA-002 - NOAA brochure -This publication has a 200 copy maximum and comes in packages of 25 copies per package. You may have to call the NLSC a second or third time.

PA-0003 - Careers in NOAA

7610-PB-000-0881 PA-0004A - Tour of the Sanctuary

PA-92050 - Flash Floods and Floods...The Awesome Power!

PA-91002 - Winter Storms...The Deceptive Killers

PA-92052 - Tornadoes...Nature's Most Violent Storms

PA-92053 - Thunderstorms and Lightning...The Underrated Killers!

PA-94050 - Hurricanes...Unleashing Nature's Fury

You can find other weather brochures that can be ordered at: www.nws.noaa.gov/om/nwspub.htm

V. Planning Guide for Major Events

1. Introduction

The year 2000 is NOAA's 30th anniversary. If your office has decided to hold a major event either in honor of the 30th anniversary or to dedicate a new office building or a new piece of equipment, this section provides a detailed step-by-step approach to event planning.

2. What makes this a public event?

For the purpose of this toolkit, a public event will mean an activity that has a special ceremonial, social or commemorative significance that justifies the assembly of people who share a professional or personal interest. Other examples of key public events include office ground breakings or dedications, as well as annual open houses, etc.

3. What is the purpose of this event?

There are many reasons to have a public event. It's important to know why you are holding the event, because these reasons will be the basis for decisions you will make during the planning process. Here are a few reasons to hold an event:

1. To recognize people for significant accomplishments.
2. To gain public attention for an organizational accomplishment.
3. To bring people together to celebrate or commemorate a major milestone in a unit's history.
4. To build public understanding and gain support for the goal/mission of the group.

A. Keys to Successful Events

Every detail counts. The difference between an "okay" event and an "excellent" event is in the attention to details.

This toolkit is intended to help you plan and execute events that are carried out in an orderly fashion and that create or sustain a high level of support for the organization among our fellow workers, within the communities where our facilities are located, with the news media, and throughout all levels of government.

B. Take the Time for Effective Planning

It's important to take time to plan well because good planning can save you trouble later on. Consider the time and energy you devote to planning for these events as "your insurance policy for success"

You want to ensure that:

1. The event was held in the right place at the right time.
2. The right things were professionally prepared and available on time.
3. The right people attended and did the right things.
4. The right planning took place to make your program work.

4. How to begin and set the date

A. Checking Calendars

First, it's important to check the schedules of key people before deciding on the final date. Your elected officials may have been very supportive of many of NOAA's activities. If so, they would probably welcome the opportunity to participate in your event.

Is there anything else going on in your community that would either complement or detract from your event? Your event can become the focus of public attention if you schedule it to coincide with things like an "Awareness Week" or some other public campaign. You should check with the Chamber of Commerce or Convention and Visitors Bureau to find out about other activities that are planned for those same dates. If you're looking for media coverage, you will compete for media attention if you pick a date that is going to cause conflicts.

It's wise to avoid scheduling events before long weekends and during observances of national, local, and religious holidays because people will have other commitments.

B. VIP Attendance

If you hope to have U.S. Senators, Congressmen or senior departmental officials attend, you should invite them via a personal letter sent at least three months before the event or via a "save the date" type of letter

as soon as you have your date confirmed. Be sure to send copies to both the Washington, D.C. offices as well as the local district office.

C. Mailing Invitations

There are two ways to invite people to the event: personal letter or pre-printed invitations. Modern protocol recommends that you mail your invitations to the general public no later than four full weeks prior to the event.

D. Mailing Lists

NOAA's Office of Public and Constituent Affairs, with its database of 9,000 names across the country, can help in some situations. In other situations, you will have to prepare your own database of names. Choose to develop category lists that can also have codes to signify the category of guest (elected official, media, emergency manager, etc.) then enter names in alphabetical order because many key community leaders will appear on several lists. One person or a team of two should share entering the data, merging, etc. to eliminate duplications. The main database should be constructed so it can be used for the mailing labels, the RSVP list, table assignments, name tags, letters, etc.

Some items for the data base include:

Title - Mr., Ms., Dr., Prof., etc.

Last Name

First Name

Middle Initial

Category - (media, elected official, etc. See checklist at the end of this document and decide how many categories you want to establish.)

Position - (within the organization represented; some people may be representing more than one organization or duty.)

Street address - Some data bases need two lines for this: Address 1, Address 2

City

State

Zip Code

Type of invitation (special VIP letter, special partner letter, general letter.)

RSVP (invited guest) and additional guests he/she may be bringing.

E. Track your RSVPs

After your invitations are sent out, you need to keep track of who's going to attend. Always ensure that you have an "RSVP" checklist in a place at your office that's accessible to everyone who could possibly answer the designated phone number on the invitation. Don't forget that in today's era, you can also accept RSVPs via email. Make sure that you have a system to indicate next to each invitee's name whether he or she plans to attend and whether there will be accompanying guests.

5. How to prepare the site for the event

A. Seating arrangements

Your key speakers can sit at a table facing the stage, or in the front row of the general seating area, or you can choose to have everyone seated in the general seating area. If you place your most important speaker in the chair to the extreme front right of the general seating area, other guests or speakers should be seated in descending order of importance from that position.

B. Flags/Banners

If you are going to display flags, the U.S. flag should be placed at the front of the room to the right of the lectern (the audience's left). A state flag can be placed to the far left of the lectern. If you are adding other flags, like the NOAA flag, remember that the U.S. flag is always placed higher in the air and farther to the audience's left. For a more complete description of how to display flags, consult the publication "Flag Etiquette" available at no cost from the American Legion. If you are doing an outdoor ceremony, you'll need to borrow sandbags to place at the base of the flag poles. Check with Public Affairs for a 30th Anniversary banner and a NOAA flag. Make sure your banners and flags are high enough so everyone can see them.

C. Printed Program

You may want to prepare a printed program. There is no standard format for a program. Generally, the following items will be included:

- (a) a listing of the ceremony's planned sequence of events
- (b) a brief synopsis of the event
- (c) biographical summaries of key participants
- (d) congratulatory statements or greetings sent to you by prominent leaders
- (e) a statement about the practical significance of the event

D. Name tags

Prepare a typed or printed name tag for every member of the staff because name tags facilitate interaction. Some events should have name tags for every attendee and other events require name tags for only the most important or VIP guest(s). A name tag should provide the person's name, the person's title, and the city and state where the office is located. Be sure to use big enough typeface when preparing the name tags; you should be able to read the name from at least 3 feet away. Staff members should wear their name tags (with their titles) before any guests arrive. Have the guests' name tags organized alphabetically so that they can be retrieved quickly as guests arrive.

E. Podium

You'll need a podium for the speakers. Logos for the 30th anniversary are available from NOAA's Office of Public and Constituent Affairs. Consider which logo will be on the podium in photographs of this event.

F. Public Address System

Good equipment is critical! Reserve equipment (and an operator, if necessary) early. Once the system is set up you need to test it thoroughly before the event begins. Make sure that the sound level is set at a comfortable level that allows everyone to hear. The microphone should be adjustable so that your speakers can move it easily. If one or more of your scheduled speakers is relatively short, you may need to arrange for a box or platform so he or she is not concealed by the lectern and can speak into the microphone comfortably.

G. Displays or Exhibits

This event is an opportunity to showcase your products and services. Decide on what you want to display, start early on the project, and make at least one person on the office team responsible.

H. Brochures. One of the first things to do is to inventory your current supply of brochures, etc. If you need brochures, order from the National Logistics Supply Center (NLSC) or check the section of this toolkit for other publications. Be sure they are laid out attractively and with like subject matter.

I. Refreshments

You cannot use government funds to purchase most refreshments. Your administrative officer can work with NOAA's Office of Small Purchases to determine if your event falls under the guidelines of acceptable events for payment of funds for refreshments. Your other options include working with other agencies or supporting groups to help bring in refreshments, or having staff bring in a few things, etc. You should ensure that all speakers have water available.

6. Making the guests feel welcome and comfortable

A. Coordinate with the Speakers

When someone outside the work group (such as a Congressional leader, mayor, other agency official) agrees to participate as an official speaker during the ceremony, be sure to call to thank him or her immediately and to say that you're sending a packet of information about the event to help prepare speaking remarks. It's also important to inform him or her of the time allotted for remarks, the site at which the event will take place, how long you anticipate the event to last, and whether other well-known people will be participating.

This is also a good time to ask:

- (a) if they have any questions about the event.
- (b) whether they have personal requests that need to be met.
- (c) whether you can help with transportation.
- (d) if they'd be willing to be interviewed by the media after the event.
- (e) whether they have any physical limitations that would impact the event.
- (f) most importantly, do they need you to help them prepare their remarks.

B. Parking

Parking should be reserved for your handicapped guests and special visitors. If appropriate, ensure that parking areas are clearly marked for your VIP guests. Don't mark each spot; save a group of spots -- it's easier that way. If necessary, dispatch someone to direct parking, especially if there is not an adequate parking close to your facility. One way to free up parking spaces is to ask your staff to park well away from your facility on the day of the event. Be sure to include a card or note in the invitation for those you expect to park in any special area.

C. Coat Racks

Ensure that you have enough coat racks and hangers in your office for your guests for coats, umbrellas, etc. This locations should be away from the main area where the ceremony will take place.

D. Rest Rooms

Ensure that rest rooms are well marked, thoroughly cleaned, and adequately supplied.

E. Greet Your Guests

Designate two or more staff members to greet the guests as they arrive. As people arrive they should be asked to sign your guest registry and/or pick up a name tag. NOAA staff should wear name tags for these events. If the attendees have coats and/or hats, the greeter should offer to hang them up. Every speaker and the most important guests should be introduced personally to the host and the guest of honor. If one of the guests is one of the key speakers, be sure to link that person up with the designated team member who will provide a briefing on where to sit and the order of speaking. If the information isn't in a printed program, prepare a handout that shows the sequence of speakers.

F. Mark the Seats

Place appropriately marked cards to reserve seats for your speakers and VIPs.

G. Decorations. This is very important and may require its own chairperson. Effective decorations can range from the simple podium to elaborate stage sets.

7. How to conduct the ceremony

Depending on the type of event, you may not need formal remarks. However, for an event with speakers, here are some hints:

A. Brief the Staff and Speakers

Before the ceremony begins, everyone participating in the event should be thoroughly briefed on how long they have to speak, the order in which they will speak, and how long the ceremony is expected to last. To ensure that the ceremony moves along in an orderly fashion, you need to appoint a master of ceremonies (emcee). You can arrange for as many speakers as you wish as long as you keep it reasonable and brief. These officials should speak in order of seniority, with the most junior or the one representing the smallest political entity speaking first.

B. Use a Script

The emcee should speak from a script to ensure that nothing has been forgotten or done out of order. The final script should be triple spaced in large type; it will be easy to read and last minute additions are clear. The pages should be clearly numbered. Copies should be given to all key players.

Speaking from a script will ensure that:

1. Peoples' names are pronounced correctly.
2. Speakers' titles are correct.
3. Proper protocol is observed.
4. Introductions, transitions and directions for the audience and speakers are given succinctly.

C. Practice the script

Once the script has been thoroughly edited and all of the titles and pronunciations have been verified, the emcee should practice it several times in front of a small audience for objective feedback. Practicing the delivery allows the emcee to become familiar with the script's words.

The "test" audience should be encouraged to comment on things like the emcee's eye contact, posture, word enunciation, voice projection, and the script's flow and length of presentation.

It's also appropriate for you to include a brief audio visual presentation in the ceremony, but don't do it if there's a chance that you'll have equipment problems. If you have an audio visual presentation during a ceremony, be sure that:

1. your equipment is completely checked out and fully operational.
2. the audio quality is clear and crisp.
3. the video/projected slide image is well focused and large enough to see.
4. everyone in the room has an unobstructed view of the screen.
5. you have someone other than the emcee in charge of controlling the lights and projection equipment and that the emcee has concise signals with that person.

8. What to do when the ceremony is over

Return everything that you've borrowed promptly and in excellent condition. Send thank you notes promptly to everyone who contributed to the success of your event, especially the speakers, those who lent you equipment or donated things like refreshments or printing services. Immediately after the event, note what went well and what could have been improved. Then send a brief report to the committee chairperson and other members so you do not lose your valuable lessons learned.

9. Suggestions for a typical open house

Develop a tour route that would include:

1. An area where people can arrive, get assembled (if weather is nice, do it outside the building's front doors.) Some offices have used this "queuing" time to stage an informal question and answer session such as "What would you like to know about the weather?" (The use of a portable microphone system enables you to answer questions so people can hear. It is a great way to keep the guests interested, let them know what they'll see, assure them it's worth the wait, etc.) This is an excellent time to educate everyone, do some demonstrations, etc.
2. An introduction of no more than 5 minutes with an overview of what the site's mission is, how it accomplishes this mission, etc. Try to keep a tour group to about 20 people and expand the number of groups as necessary.
3. Have someone assigned as that group's "tour guide." This person is responsible for keeping the group together. As the group departs the room through one door, the next group comes in.
4. Divide the operations area into 3 or 4 "stops." Hang the numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 above each area. If visitors get distracted, they'll remember what part they've seen and can rejoin their group.
5. A designated spokesperson should be assigned to each "stop." This person should know how to explain the area in 3-5 minutes in a prepared presentation, with or without graphics. Make sure all spokespersons coordinate their talks, and that their timing is the same, so the groups can move in an orderly fashion from stop to stop. HINT: Have at least two people trained to do each stop' this allows for rotation of speakers, breaks, etc. The "stop" person is stationary and the tour guide moves the group around.
6. If you have outside instruments or co-located equipment, be sure to include them as additional "stops."

10. Summary

When you're planning an event, there is no substitute for good planning and coordination. If you keep focused on the goals of your meeting and the needs of your guests, the event will be a success. If you allow yourself to get sidetracked, you're bound to miss some important detail that could cause inconvenience or embarrassment.

To help keep you on track, the check lists in the next section will help you to identify who's responsible for the different parts of the project and when each item has been completed.

Event Planning Staff List

A. HINTS: Keep information in a data base, post checklists in an obvious spot, block off deliberate planning meeting times so you meet regularly starting at least 4 months in advance.

B. You'll need the following personnel to "chair" portions of the major event:

_____ Overall Chairperson

_____ Vice Chairperson (knows everything as well and can fill in if necessary)

_____ Guest Liaison Leader: Prepares invitation lists, letters to guests (including VIPs), monitors RSVP, badges, etc.

_____ Tour Program Leader (will have several people assigned to the Chair to develop tour route, discussion items, demonstrations, brochures, demonstrations, printed program if needed, etc.

Tour Program Team Members _____

_____ Decorations/Physical Site Leader:

_____ Partners/Co-Exhibitors Leader: If you decide more agencies will participate, then you'll need a team to coordinate resources, requirements, demonstrations, outside facilities, etc.

_____ Media Relations Leader. Needs to coordinate with media, set up pre-event interviews, news releases, etc. Develop remote control schedule, etc. Send periodic "teaser" updates to heighten media interest.

Event Planning Time Line

FOUR-SIX MONTHS BEFORE EVENT:

1. Make informal inquiries to elected officials for availability on desired date.
2. Determine first choice of date of ceremony; coordinate with committee and key speakers and key guests if date is OK; follow-up with letter identifying date/time/location to speakers.
3. Check dates of competing community activities.
4. Determine whether to hold the event inside or outside; if outside, have an inside plan ready.
5. Coordinate with committee chairperson to order invitations, schedule other support, budget requests, reserve displays, etc.
6. Determine key staff assignments. Select a primary and alternate staff person for each area of responsibility.
7. Contract with local hotel/motel for out-of-town guest rooms (seek group rates), as needed.
8. Are you going to have public open house(s) the day before or after your ceremony. If so, appoint staff person to coordinate this event in addition to the other ceremony.
9. Contact local/regional monthly or bi-monthly publications for interest on a feature story.
10. Begin compiling guest list.
11. Inventory your supplies and order brochures.
12. Block work schedules with date and event and have leadership approve any requests for leave, training, etc. during key phases of this event planning and the event.
13. Reserve Portable Public Address System, banners, etc.

TWO MONTHS BEFORE EVENT

1. Send out letters of invitation to legislators and senior officials; include background; if known, include name of keynote speaker and explain role. Give times of event sequences.
2. Write or update unit or office history for press kits.
3. See if you can get on local radio/TV interview format show the week of dedication; schedule now and send the media host background and suggested questions.
4. Prepare your mailing list in an interactive software that allows you to combine various mailing lists into a final alphabetical list.
5. Update your office's web page and include information about the open house.
6. See if you can get other agencies to include information on their web pages.

SIX WEEKS BEFORE EVENT:

1. Prepare first draft of script or what will be discussed at each "stop" of open house.
2. Buy stamps or refill postage meter.
3. Start making your RSVP list to correspond to your invitee list.
4. Assign staff tasks.
5. Prepare draft of printed program for several staff to read.

FIVE WEEKS BEFORE EVENT:

1. Determine event layout; arrange for table, chairs, PA system, flags, podium with logo, etc.
2. Revise printed program.
3. Send out speakers' information with agenda, map, parking instructions, etc.
4. Appoint media relations person from the staff; draft news release or media advisory.
5. Update hotel/motel arrangements.
6. Prepare second draft of script(s).
7. If applicable, provide items to NOAA Weather Radio about an open house. Update with new information as it becomes available.

ONE MONTH BEFORE EVENT:

1. Update script draft and forward to committee chair.
2. Dry run the special media briefings, photo opportunities, etc.
3. Dry run the special VIP tours; determine if you need directional signage for tours.
4. Work with printer on the contents of your printed program if you choose to have one.
5. Mail letters to special VIPs (include VIP reception or tour information).
6. Evaluate parking facilities; determine number of reserved spots needed; notify local police if you'll need help with traffic on day of ceremony.

7. Send note to nearby neighbors or businesses and tell them about event (invite them if appropriate) and tell them about temporary disruption in traffic.
8. Arrange for grass cutting, grounds clean up and janitorial service day prior to event.
9. Arrange for exhibit or posters. Get easels as necessary.
10. Identify special VIPs that need to be met by committee members. Make a list and assign a "meeter/greeter" group.
11. Arrange to borrow or rent chairs.
12. Order presentation gifts.
13. Begin construction of local displays.

THREE WEEKS BEFORE EVENT:

1. Work with weekly papers for features about the event.
2. Coordinate with TV and radio reporters if they want to do live remotes from your event. Ensure that you'll have appropriate people available for on-camera interviews.
3. Determine staff needs for reserved seating – during the event, they'll be too busy to worry about their seating arrangements.
4. Confirm that decorations/exhibits/sand bags/etc. will be ready on time.
5. Coordinate special cleaning with cleaning contractor; include window cleaning no more than 2 days in advance so windows will stay clean.

TWO WEEKS BEFORE EVENT:

1. Finalize script; practice it.
2. Prepare name tags: VIPs & committee and guests as they RSVP.
3. Appoint someone to take pictures & video; purchase film.
4. Send news release announcing public event to weekly & daily newspapers, TV and radio.
5. Finalize your displays.
6. Draft photo/video list of "must get" photos. Do you need more than one photographer? If so, divide list of necessary photos so nothing is missed.
7. Arrange for limo or special transportation as needed.

ONE WEEK BEFORE EVENT:

1. Finalize script. Time it and practice it. Hold final rehearsal as necessary.
2. Distribute media advisory.
3. Finalize unit history and other items for press kit or program as handout.
4. Verify refreshments are lined up.
5. Call local Congressional offices to confirm attendance and total number of people attending. Be sure to offer them an opportunity to say a few words. (This is not appropriate if a "staff rep" is the only attendee. Only the actual Congressional representative should be asked to speak.) (Remain flexible on number of speakers.)
6. Finalize program.
7. Assign staff to track media coverage; tape all news stories; monitor radio interviews.
8. Confirm names of staff to greet guests, media, speakers.
9. Publish list of staff responsibilities with times and specifics. Every job should have a primary and backup person and everyone should know what is expected if he or she must fill in for someone else at the last minute. Have this matrix chart ready to post near the main entrance so everyone will know where to go if they see something that needs to be done – they'll know who is supposed to do it (as well as who the backup is).
10. Assemble all items needed for ceremony.
11. Identify which local photo processing shop has best turn-around time for photos taken during event.

TWO DAYS BEFORE EVENT:

1. Make follow up calls to news media.
2. Finalize and practice script.
3. Finalize press kits.
4. Have grass cut and trimmed.
5. Clean up parking area.
6. Have inside spaces thoroughly cleaned, including windows.
7. Clean out coat closets; check hangers.
8. Verify arrangements for refreshments tables, linens, etc.
9. Finalize photo/video list of "must get" photos.

DAY BEFORE EVENT:

1. Practice script.
2. Set up ceremony site.
3. Inspect facility inside and out.
4. Set up exhibits, brochure tables, etc.

DAY OF EVENT:

1. Practice script.
2. Have photographer take pictures.
3. Enjoy the day.
4. Assign someone to make sure the guest of honor has water, drink, etc.

DAY AFTER EVENT:

1. Send thank you letters.
2. Return borrowed or rented items.
3. Prepare brief report for staff notes.
4. Check newspapers that sent reporters to event, clip articles.
5. Get film processed -- order duplicates.

AFTER EVENT:

1. Include highlights in your office's newsletter.
2. Let NOAA Office of Public and Constituent Affairs know of event.

VI. Working with the Local Press

Depending on your event, local press may provide yet another opportunity to spread the word about the event, and your office, as well as NOAA. This is only a guideline to assist you if you feel the event should include the local press.

The event provides an excellent opportunity for the staff to work together on a common project. The event chairperson should appoint one person to work with the media. You should have more than one person able to conduct interviews. Prepare a release about the event and send it out by fax two weeks prior to the event. Follow up the fax with a personal call to the assignment editor. Send a reminder two days before the event again and another call. Make a list of media expected to attend, ask them what they'd like to cover so you can get the interviews lined up.

Don't forget to contact all local TV meteorologists and invite them to come to the office during the week of the event and do "live remotes" from the office. You can then have them help promote the event. Schedule as many appearances on local programming shows as possible (talk shows, guest appearances, etc.).

NOAA's Office of Public and Constituent Affairs may be able to assist you. For initial information, call 202/482-6090.

MEDIA (identify assignment editors & reporters)

Local newspapers (dailies, weeklies, monthlies, special interest)

Local and regional wire services

Local and state magazines

Local TV

Local radio

Local cable companies

Local university newspapers, TV, radio

Non-traditional media (newsletters for community organizations, etc.)

VI. Working with Local Constituents

We sometimes overlook working with obvious constituent groups who either have a vested interest in NOAA or should be informed about what NOAA can do for the community. Some of these suggested groups are listed below. You may want to create a mailing list of recommended community contacts from this list. NOAA's Office of Public and Constituent Affairs may be able to provide assistance with your questions. For initial information, call 202/482-6090.

NATIONAL/STATE/FEDERAL AGENCIES (FAA, Red Cross, Corps of Engineers, etc.)

FAMILY, FRIENDS, BUSINESS and PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATES

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Governor

US Senators & Representatives in Congress

State Senators & Representatives

Local elected officials (mayor, council members)

Local school board officials (elected)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Local Planning and Zoning Council

Local Board of Supervisors (each county)

Regional Planning Councils

LAW ENFORCEMENT

COMMUNITY/CUSTOMERS OR OTHER SIMILAR GROUPS

OTHER COMMUNITY CONTACTS

-Board of Realtors

-Local Chamber of Commerce

-Local Universities

-Local education boards, school districts and PTAs

-Local special education groups (e.g., science teachers association)

-Local civic groups (Rotary, Kiwanis, Toastmasters, etc.)

-Retirees, families, and friends

-Federal Executives Group

-Convention and Visitors Bureau

-Major employers in area

-Military and Reserve Units in Area

-Various community lists of organizations

-Senior living centers (they enjoy field trips)

-Schools (Elementary-High Schools) -- Focusing on science departments, etc. Don't forget private schools and home-schooling organizations. Talk to the state or district education office on the best approach to develop the mailing list. Also target school science clubs.

-Youth groups (Boy and Girl Scouts, etc.)